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SUPPORT BULLETIN

FOR INFORMATION OF HEADQUARTERS
AND FIELD PERSONNEL

This document is part of an integrated file. If separated from the file it must be subjected to individual systematic review.

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PURPOSE

The Support Bulletin, to be published periodically, is designed to keep headquarters and field personnel informed on administrative, personnel, and support matters. The Support Bulletin is not directive in nature but rather attempts to present items which, in general, are of interest to all personnel and, in particular, of interest to those employees occupying various support positions. Suggestions and constructive criticism from both headquarters and field personnel are encouraged.

NOTE: — This bulletin is *for information only.* It does not constitute authority for action and is in no way a substitute for regulatory material.

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LANGUAGE INCENTIVE PROGRAM APPROVED

The Director has approved a program under which Organization employees will earn fixed sums of money for acquisition or maintenance of ability to read, speak, or write foreign languages. The rewards for acquisition of skill in additional languages will vary with the level of competence acquired and with the difficulty of the particular language. The program has been under development for some months under the guidance of the Career Council. Administrative procedures and detailed criteria which will govern the program are presently being formulated and will be published soon.

As a companion to the system of incentive pay for attainment and retention of language competence, the Organization will undertake a complete inventory of the current language competences of personnel. This will be initiated by a questionnaire which will permit all staff personnel to record their estimate of their own competence. Thereafter, language proficiency tests will be administered on a scheduled basis for the purpose of ascertaining the actual level of competence of each individual claiming proficiency.

CAREER SERVICE PROGRAM

In the development and administration of a Career Service Program the need for many improvements in personnel management has become manifest. We are working toward a planned and comprehensive training program for the development of career personnel, a system of "directed" assignments (recognizing, of course, personal circumstances), early notification to field personnel of the next assignment, stabilization and standardization of promotion policies, and replacing fixed tables of organization with flexible staffing patterns.

CREDIT UNION FACILITIES

All personnel are reminded that the facilities of the Credit Union can be extended to field personnel. This is an excellent service for the deposit of savings, and, if a loan is essential, the Credit Union can loan at reasonable interest rates to employees who are members. The facilities of the Credit Union are available to employees after investing five dollars for one share (deposit) plus a .25 fee. The Finance Officers and Administrative Officers can provide the forms and information necessary to Credit Union membership, deposits, and loans. In real emergencies, loans can be requested and authorized by cable (to be followed by dispatch of required forms).

LEGISLATION IN THE MILL

Several proposed changes to our basic legislation have been submitted. No attempt is made here to go into any detail, but a few of the proposals which would result in benefits to personnel are:

a. Allowances for employees at foreign posts for the purpose of returning their children to go to high school or college.

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b. A proposal for home leave in addition to annual leave for employees serving overseas. After two years' service abroad an employee would be entitled to five working days' leave for each four months he has served abroad. Such leave would be in addition to his annual leave.

c. Authorization for the Organization to pay a large part of the cost of medical treatment of dependents located abroad and the entire cost where the illness or injury is caused by the fact that the dependent is located abroad.

d. A provision for earlier retirement and larger retirement benefits for employees who have served abroad with the additional benefits to be in direct proportion to the length of their foreign service and the time spent at unhealthful posts.

Employees are cautioned that the provisions included in the proposed legislation are far from enactment and are subject to modification or even disapproval. We are, however, taking all possible steps to obtain maximum benefits for our personnel serving overseas with special emphasis on medical and health benefits for employees and their dependents.

TRAVEL REGULATIONS

It is recognized that the absence of appropriate travel regulations has created innumerable administrative problems, especially for overseas stations. We have been confronted with many problems in the development of travel regulations; the most bothersome being the problem of adopting by reference other travel regulations, supplemented by certain regulations of our own. This has not proved to be satisfactory since all interested personnel have not had the referenced regulations in their possession, and, in some instances, our regulations conflict with others. Consequently, we are writing a complete set of travel regulations which will govern our personnel without reference to any other regulations. Even so, there will always be cases where certain personnel may be governed by other regulations, such as military details

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SUGGESTION AWARDS PROGRAM

All employees are encouraged to participate in the Suggestion Awards Program. Civilian employees whose ideas are adopted are eligible for awards ranging from ten dollars to five thousand dollars, and those whose ideas are exceptionally meritorious may receive up to twenty-five thousand dollars. Employee suggestions submitted should include the following:

a. Description of the present practice, method, or problem.

b. Details of the change that is suggested, and where and how it can be used.

c. Benefits to be derived from its use.

d. Name, job title, and grade of suggester.

e. Comments of employee's supervisor including recommendation for approval or disapproval.

Awards for adopted suggestions with intangible benefits are based on a scale which gives consideration to the degree of benefit and the extent of application. Award amounts for suggestions resulting in tangible savings are determined in accordance with the following scale in which savings are usually those estimated for the first full year of operation following adoption:

Savings Dollars	*Amount of Award* Dollars
1–200	10
201–1,000	10 for the first 200 in savings and 5 for each additional 100 or fraction thereof.
1,001–10,000	50 for the first 1,000 in savings and 5 for each additional 200 or fraction thereof.
10,001–100,000	275 for the first 10,000 in savings and 5 for each additional 1,000 or fraction thereof.
100,001–or more	725 for the first 100,000 in savings and 5 for each additional 5,000 or fraction thereof.

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CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT

(This is the first of a series of articles on the liberalized Civil Service Retirement (CSR) Act.)

General Requirements for New CSR Benefits

You must have had at least five years of civilian service either to retire or for your family to be paid CSR survivor benefits. If you leave with less than that amount of service, you'll be paid the balance in your CSR account in a lump sum.

For other than disability retirement, you also must have been employed under the CSR Act for at least a year out of the last two years preceding your final separation.

Your high-five average salary is used as a key factor in computing your annuity. It is the highest average annual salary produced by your basic salary rates in any five consecutive years of service. In most cases, it will be the last five years. Within-grade promotions are a part of basic salary but overtime and allowances are not.

Length of service is computed by adding all periods of civilian service plus any creditable military service. Length of service does not include any period for which you were paid a refund of CSR deductions or deductions under some other retirement system unless you redeposited the refund with interest.

Ceiling on annuity: Your basic annuity can't be more than 80 percent of your high-five average salary. If it works out to a higher figure, simply use the 80 percent as your basic annuity.

Retirement Options Wide — Ranging on Age

You must retire at 70 if you have 15 years of service. If you have less than 15 years when you reach 70, you must retire when you complete the 15 years. The Civil Service Commission (CSC) has authority to waive the mandatory retirement provision for all employees except presidential appointees, whose retention requires action by the President himself. The authority is seldom used because reemployment after retirement is now so much easier.

You have the option of retiring on immediate annuities under these conditions: At age 62 after five years of service; at age 60 after 30 years; and at age 55 after 30 years.

In addition, you can retire on an immediate annuity if you lose your job through no fault of your own at any age after 25 years of service, or at age 50 after 20 years.

If you're totally disabled for service in the position you occupy, you can retire on an immediate disability annuity after five years of service.

Finally, if you have five or more years of service and leave for any reason before you are eligible for an immediate annuity, you may keep your money in the CSR fund and be paid a deferred annuity at age 62.

NOTE: The next issue will contain information on how to compute your annuity.

PER DIEM EXCEPTION

Several PCS returnees from overseas posts in submitting their travel vouchers have included claims for twelve dollars a day per diem for that portion of the travel occurring in our country. These claims are no doubt made because twelve dollars is the rate normally applied for travel in our country. However, regulations further provide that a maximum rate of six dollars per diem is payable for travel in our country by airplane or train when the traveler is *en route to or from an overseas post.*

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